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SUBJECT: IRAQ/KUWAIT INITIATIVE MEETINGS IN NEW YORK

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Classified By: AMBASSADOR ALEX WOLFF, FOR REASONS 1.4 B/D

¶1. (C) Summary: In meetings at the UN on July 29, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon presented the initiative on Iraq/Kuwait (reftel) to the Kuwaiti FM. Separately, ex-SRSG Staffan de Mistura and other UN officials presented the same initiative to Iraqi PR Bayati, and the P3 presented the initiative to the other members of the P5 (Russia and China).

Overall, reaction was cautious but positive. In particular, the Kuwaitis expressed concern regarding the idea of a panel to review Iraq/Kuwait maritime issues. However, they tentatively agreed to a fact-finding technical mission to determine whether a panel was necessary. End summary.

¶2. (C) According to Darko Mocibob, DPA team leader on Iraq, the Secretary-General discussed the initiative with Kuwaiti FM al-Sabah in a one-on-one meeting on July 29, followed by an expanded meeting with advisors. Al-Sabah did not object to the decrease in Iraqi reparations payments from 5 percent to 2.5 percent, and said that this was the prerogative of the Council to decide. He also welcomed the affirmation of resolution 833 and the proposed letter from PM Maliki to the Council. He and the rest of his delegation reserved their greatest skepticism for the idea of a panel being created to review outstanding issues on the Iraq/Kuwait maritime boundary. Al-Sabah said the Iraqis had never raised any maritime-related issues with Kuwait, and said Kuwait did not know of any problems. Later, however, Kuwait tentatively accepted the idea of a "fact-finding" technical mission that would assess whether there were indeed any outstanding issues related to the Iraq/Kuwait maritime boundary. Kuwaiti advisors to al-Sabah subsequently cautioned that these were initial reactions, and that they did not constitute official Kuwaiti acceptance of the initiative.

¶3. (C) On July 30, Mocibob (please protect) told Poloff an additional detail related to the al-Sabah meeting: in the private one-on-one, al-Sabah told the Secretary-General that Kuwait did not want ex-SRSG de Mistura to be their primary UN interlocutor. The Secretary-General did not reveal al-Sabah's reasons for saying this. Mocibob said the UN is in internal discussions regarding how to react. Among the ideas are to allow A/SYG for Legal Affairs Taksoe-Jensen to continue technical-level talks, and if a high-level envoy is needed for interacting with the Kuwaitis, the UN would send someone else. De Mistura would continue as the high-level interlocutor to the Iraqis.

¶4. (C) Later in the day on July 29, de Mistura and Taskoe-Jensen presented the initiative to Iraqi PR Bayati. De Mistura asked that Bayati immediately send details of the initiative directly to PM Maliki, bypassing his advisors. Bayait said he would do so immediately, said Mocibob, who

attended the meeting with de Mistura and Taksoe-Jensen.

¶5. (C) The same day, Poloff as well as French and UK representatives presented basic details of the initiative to Russia and China. Representatives from both countries welcomed the initiative. The Russian expert (who served in Iraq during the Saddam era) remarked that the Iraqi focus on the maritime boundary is exactly the same as during the last years of the Saddam era. He questioned whether the points included in the initiative were sufficient to satisfy Kuwaiti concerns, but concluded that the initiative was an important step. The P3 explained that this process was still in its early stages, but that at some point in the future, the UN may ask for the P5 to lobby Kuwait and Iraq on behalf of the initiative. Russia and China did not raise any objections to this.

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